



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Finance Committee Minutes 06-02-2003

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

7:30 PM Town hall hearing room

6/2/03

ATTENDEES:

Janowitz*	Feinleib*	O'Riordan*	O'Neill	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors*	Simmons*	Morrisette	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan*	
Piandes*	Franclemont*	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*	Tosi	Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Town Manager Nancy Galkowski, School Committee Chair Suzanne Owayda

REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS: Galkowski provided a handout detailing recent changes totaling \$1 million:

- \$270,000 Chapter 70 increase proposed by Senate and likely to be approved in conference with the House
- \$200,000 Minuteman has reduced its assessment as previously rumored.
- \$120,000 Reduction of tipping fee from \$145 per ton to \$140 per ton
- \$410,000 Fewer expected layoffs reduce unemployment insurance needs.

These estimates are thought to be conservative based on discussions between Lyons, Tosti and Foskett. There was some discussion of using a less conservative figure.

VOTED to revise the budget based on an additional \$1 million distributed according to the O'Neill formula.
 Unanimous

DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE: Galkowski provided a handout proposing the \$1 million be split between town and schools according to O'Neill formula: \$440,000, town; \$560,000, schools. She proposed that the town portion be used to fund public-safety overtime to ensure "minimum manning," \$160,000; to pay for field maintenance thus avoiding increased user fees, \$174,426; and to restore some funds to Council on Aging, \$21,804; library, \$63,772, and youth services, \$20,000. She stated that the Board of Selectmen has unofficially approved this distribution. In questioning, Galkowski explained her reasoning for each recommendation and stated that the department heads had been consulted. In discussion, members questioned the Board of Selectmen priorities. Some feel that human services and library deserve more consideration. A majority believes the field-user fee is appropriate and equitable. Some believe that these policy decisions belong with the Board of Selectmen. Some questioned the wisdom of disputing this issue at this late date and so close to the override vote.

VOTED to distribute the additional revenue according to the manager's recommendation, 13-3.

VOTED that the chair discuss the field-user-fee fairness issue before Town Meeting as part of the Finance Committee report on the revised budget and that he recommend this matter be reconsidered next year. Unanimous.

BUDGET B (contingent on override) to be revised based on actually raising taxes \$3.5 million, half the deficit. Town manager will provide printed information to Town Meeting.

TRANSFERS:

Requested by manager to offset higher-than-expected insurance costs:

\$10,000 from Reserve Fund to Unemployment Insurance. VOTED to approve Unanimous
\$5,000 from Reserve Fund to Property Insurance (auto). VOTED to approve Unanimous.
Request from Fire Chief to be investigated by Simmons.

COMMITTEE: The Finance Committee will meet Wednesday, June 4, at 7:15 p.m. in the Town Hall Hearing Room before Town Meeting begins.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE : \$267,532-\$15,000=\$252,532.

Peter B. Howard,
Secretary